

Secrets to Surviving Life's Storms, Part 3 - Acts 27:9-14 – August 1st, 2010

- This is part three of a series I've titled; "Secrets to Surviving Life's Storms," as we study the Apostle Paul's life and all he went through.
- Other than the Savior, and perhaps Job before Him, I think everyone of us would be hard pressed to find anyone who had it so rough.
- Paul's life was riddled with difficulty, and here, as he draws near to the end of his life we see him in another storm that threatens his life.
- So how did he do it? How did the Apostle Paul survive it? What was the secret to Paul's victorious life in surviving the storms of life?

1. Purpose (Verse 1)

- Though Paul could've been set free, he's still a prisoner going to Rome because this was according to God's plan and purpose for Paul.
- If we ever hope to get through and even gut through the storms of life, we will have to trust that the Lord has a purpose for it in our life.

2. Trustworthiness (Verses 2-3)

- Paul is allowed to have Luke and Aristarchus board the ship with him, and he's entrusted with the freedom to go to his friends at Sidon.
- Often times the Lord will allow us to go through a specific trial because He has deemed us a trustworthy recipient of such a thing.

3. Perseverance (Verses 4-5)

- Because the winds were against them, the ship was redirected in a different route requiring perseverance in order to survive the storm.
- When we realize that perseverance will come vis-à-vis the trial, then, when the winds are against us, we will persevere through the trial.

4. Endurance (Verses 6-8)

- They make slow headway for many days and had difficulty because the wind didn't allow them to stay on course, requiring endurance.
- Perseverance and endurance go together. Endurance remains steadfast in the storm and perseverance presses on through the storm.
- Another way to say it is that endurance will "weather the storm," so that perseverance is then able to survive, "despite the storm."

5. Faith (Verses 9-12)

9 Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Fast. So Paul warned them, 10 "Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also." 11 But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship. 12 Since the harbor was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest.

- v9 They'd lost an enormous amount of time by now and it had become dangerous because it was after the time of the Fast in October.
- v10 Paul warns them by telling them that he sees that this is going to be disastrous bringing great loss to their ship, cargo and their lives.
- v11 In spite of Paul's warning the centurion follows the advice of the ships owner instead of listening to Paul, and decides to keep going.
- v12 Since the harbor wasn't safe to winter in, the majority decide that they should continue on to Phoenix, which is a harbor in Crete.

- To say that they are in a difficult predicament would be an understatement because if they stay, it's to their peril, and if they go, it's peril.
- In other words, either way they are risking everything, and could in fact lose everything regardless of which way they may decide to go.
- Be that as it may, Paul is trusting in the Lord - because of his faith in the Lord to get them through this dangerous and disastrous storm.

- Hebrews 11:1 in the King James Version says: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."
- I like it in the NIV even better; "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." (Hebrews 11:1 NIV)

- We need to look at something else here before we move on; notice that Julias took the advice of the captain and owner of the ship.
- The reason why both the captain and the owner, along with the majority, made the decision to keep going was because of the money.
- To stay for what could have been three months, would have meant that they would lose a lot of money. This was an economic decision.
- I think the lesson we can learn from this is that we should base our decisions on faith spiritually, and not base them on fear financially.

6. Patience (Verses 13-14)

13 When a gentle south wind began to blow, they thought they had obtained what they wanted; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete. 14 Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the "northeaster," swept down from the island.

- v13 They think they had made the right decision when at first the wind blew both gently and favorably, so they continue to sail on.
- v14 It isn't very long when all of a sudden, a hurricane force wind called the "northeaster," or "Euroclydon" sweeps down upon them.
- It must have dawned on them at this point that Paul was right, and they should have just stayed put and waited until winter was over.
- It's interesting to note that at first, the wind was more like a breeze, which is why they actually set out instead of patiently waiting it out.
- One has aptly noted that this majority was impatient; they took a vote, and tested the wind in order to find the quickest and easiest way.
- I think the lesson here becomes very clear in that impatience can be very dangerous and even deadly as it could have been for them.

As one commentator wrote: "Beware when the south wind blows softly, especially when it blows in the teeth of advice given by an Apostle Paul. Too many have been lured away by the soft south wind. It is all too easy to take seemingly favorable circumstances as the deciding factor in the matter of guidance and ignore the sterner counsel of the Word of God. ...The scales come down on the side of the expert, on the side of science and scholarship, on the side of the man whose opinion is weighted by his position, by his learning in his particular field. The voice of the humble believer in touch with God is ignored. Darwin is given precedence over Moses; the scientist is preferred before the saint; and all are losers."

2 Timothy 3:10-11 - Proverbs 16:32